

Kent Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Trauma Care Update

June 2021

Situation:

This paper provides an update on the current situation of trauma services for Kent and Medway residents.

Background:

The development of Major Trauma Networks was a national requirement set out in the revised NHS Operating Framework of 2010/11. The South East London, Kent and Medway (SELKaM) network went live in April 2013 and is the operational delivery network serving trauma and major trauma patients in South East London and the Kent and Medway areas. There are 27 MTCs in England.

The SELKaM Trauma Network is a hub and spoke model with Kings College Hospital in London serving as the Major Trauma Centre (MTC) supported by 7 trauma units (TU's), 3 of which are in Kent & Medway located at the William Harvey Hospital in Ashford, Medway Hospital in Medway and Tunbridge Wells Hospital in Pembury. The other A&E departments in Kent and Medway are local emergency hospitals. Kings College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust is the host for our Trauma Network and the network is responsible for ensuring standards of trauma care.

Assessment:

Seriously injured adults and children are described as having suffered from major trauma. This is measured on a scale known as the Injury Severity Score (ISS) which scores injuries from 1 to 75, the latter being the most serious. Patients who have an ISS > 15 are defined as having suffered from major trauma. In addition, patients with an ISS of 9-15 have moderately severe trauma.

A MTC has all the facilities and specialties required to be able to treat patients with any type of injury in any combination. Examples of such patients, are patients who have suffered traumatic amputation of one or more limbs, patients with a serious head injury and patients who have suffered a number of injuries (known as polytrauma) such as a combination of abdominal and chest injuries.

The main difference between a major trauma centre and a trauma unit is the provision of very specialist services such as neuro surgery and cardio thoracic surgery.

Update:

The Major Trauma Network arrangement is still in place. Kent and Medway will continue to have local emergency hospitals and trauma units however there are no plans to develop an MTC due to the very specialist nature of the services which must be co-located together to get the best

outcome for our patients. There are only small numbers of patients who require these very specialist services and therefore, at the moment, these services could not be sustained in Kent and Medway until we reach a minimum population of 2 million people.

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